

# ABSALOMS

FVNERALL:

PREACHED AT BANBURY,  
BY A NEIGHBOVR  
MINISTER.

O R.

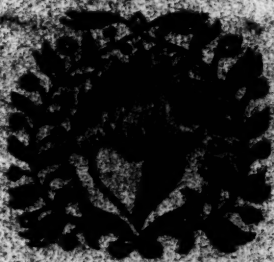
THE LAMENTATION OF A  
LOVING FATHER FOR A  
rebellious Child.

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PROV. II. 32.

*Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth; how much more  
the wicked and the finner?*

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LONDON,

Printed by John Hensland for John Barlet, and are to  
be sold in the Gold-Smiths Row in Cheap-side,  
at the Signe of the Golden Cope.

1630.

OMO



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# TO THE READER.



See here (Reader) way made to  
the Hebrew Proverbe: Is Saul  
also among the Prophets?  
His friends held it strange to  
see him prophesying, or singing  
holy songs, (as it is expoun-  
ded :) and it will be as strange

1 Sam. to. 10.  
11.

to all that know me, to finde me in the Presse, both in  
respect of mine insufficiencie, (in which regard the  
Word is put upon me by him that applies it to such  
smatterers) as also in regard of my disposition and  
affection, who haue in others disliked this ouer-  
printing, and for my selfe, alwayes affected (it may  
be, too much) priuacie and retirednesse. But see  
what importunity can doe. In the second of the  
Kings, chap. 2. there is a very absurd motion made

1. de Vatabl.  
ad locum.

Poljd. Virgil.  
Adog. 374.

## To the Reader.

to Elisha by well-meaning men, and Elisha in the end yeelds to them, in a sort against his will. And why? they were instant upon him till he was ashamed, verse 17. This motion of Printing was to me at first as that to him; yet now at last, (being ashamed to be inexorable) I haue said, with him, Send. Now if the Printer, (the chiefe actor I meane in this businesse) returne as wise as they, hauing his labour (with them) for his paines, my answer is the same with the Prophets, Said I not, Doe not goe? Thou hast my defence (Reader) for the Printing. If any thing offend thee in the Sermon preached, thou must remember, that I meant it to an assembly knowne, not to strangers unknowne: and therefore doe not blame me for not trying the Latine or Greeke tongue, vntlesse thou canst helpe my hearers to Latine or Greeke cares, and then I shall make no more scruple of Latine than English: in the meane time I dare promise no more than that I thinke is as familiar to them as English, yea, such English as they vnderstand: for some English is Hebrew to the vulgar sort. If thou take exception further at my naked margent, because it is so emptie of humane Authors, I pray thee be satisfied with this answer: First, our Auditors in these parts are content to take Gods bare Word, without any



## To the Reader.

any further band of testimony. Secondly, I cannot discharge my selfe (I iudge not others that use it) of pride and ambition, if I should be quoyling: for all that know the smalnesse of my standing, weaknesse of my body, greamesse of imployment, in a place vnder taken with as much feare and unwillingnesse, as it is vnder gone with paine and heavinesse, doe well know that my reading cannot be great, and my owne soule knowes, that there can be nothing to worke me to this practice, (in these parts) vnlesse I would be ambitious: for to what end should I tell poore people of Fathers and Historians? what should moue me to it, when I know before-hand, they will thinke neuer the better of me, nor of my doctrine for so doing? (verb. gra.) In speaking of Iobs children in the first point, I allude to a place in Chrysostome: to what end should I amaze them with his name, and his homily Ad pop. Antioch.: In another place speaking of sinne in the godly, ad agonem, I remembred Austins discourse about that matter. In speaking of Popes, I thought of Polydore Virgils note in that behalfe: and the bringing in of Dauid speaking to his sonne, put me in minde of Cæsars patheticall speech to Brutus, and the very mention of Absaloms rockie heart, not yeelding,

## To the Reader.

brought to my remembrance Hannibals practice  
with the rockes to make them giue place. Now, (I  
pray you) had I not little to doe, if I should thrust  
all these into a Sermon? If I should doe so in such  
an Auditory, would not my heart say, Now thou  
seekest thy selfe? What others doe, I know not, I  
iudge none, my heart would smite me for it in  
this place: and therefore hold me excused (good  
Reader) till I see further reason for such a practice.  
In the meane time, if this Sermon be too plaine for  
thee, leaue it to them that loue plainenesse. If thou  
finde any benefit by it, blesse God, thanke the  
Printer, bestow one prayer on me, who  
desire increase of grace on thee,  
and on all the Israel  
of God.

Thine in Christ,

ROBERT HARRIS.

Hanwell the 25. of August. 1610.



A  
SERMON PREACHED  
AT BANBVRIE, BY A  
neighbour Minister there.

2. S A M. and (as our Bookes distinguish it)

CHAP. 18. VERSE 33.

*Then the King was moued, and went vp to the Chamber ouer the Gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said; O my sonne Absalom, my sonne, my sonne Absalom: would God I had died for thee; O Absalom; my sonne, my sonne.*



WE read in the former Chapters, of Absaloms strange and vnnaturall practices against his owne Father: in this we read of as strange a iudgement (as strange sinnes doe beget strange plagues) executed vpon him from heauen. The Lord hauing trusted him by the haire; (fit matter for an halter) and Lord with his mercy dispatche him; the King his father is now to vnderstand the newes; who waiting the rydings at the Gate of Mahanaim, and receiuing a message contrary to his expectation and desire, (for he desired nothing lesse than Absaloms death) was exceedingly moued (as the word implies) and finding himselfe ouercharged with griefe, he

he takes couert as soone as he can, gets into the next roome, there to weepe it out: but before he could come thither, his heart would breake, vnlesse it found a vent; and therefore he discharges himselfe at the stayres, as he goes, and breakes forth, as you heare, *O my sonne Absalom, &c.* which words are vitered (you see) vpon the report of his sonnes death, and containe a report of his behauiour, what time the tidings was first brought to him. Plaine they be of themselues, and lye open to the shallowest braine, so that we need no Comment; and for Method, it is against Method to obserue any order in them. Yet if you will (to the end you may the better see the grounds of the points to bee gathered) you may obserue in them two things: first, *Dauids* sorrow; secondly, the occasion thereof. The occasion is implied in the first word, which is capable of more readings, than it hath letters in it, by farre; and here we render it [*Then.*] His sorrow is set downe, both as it was inwardly concerned, and outwardly expressed: conceived, hee was moued; expressed, partly by deeds; hee wept: which is amplified from the place on the stayres, and in the Chamber; partly in words, words (I say) of complaint and wish, and all for his sonne *Absalom*. Let vs beginne with the first; and sith time will not giue me leaue to speake of all, let vs gripe as much at once as we can, and binde many things together within the compasse of few points. *Then* (saith the Text,) that is, when he had received newes touching *Absaloms* death; *the King*, that is, *Dauid*. *Absaloms* Father, *Israels King*, was moued: the word importeth some great alteration in a man, by reason either of some feare, or griefe, or anger, or all. Now, howsoever all these did meet in *Dauid*; yet in this place his motion is chiefly from griefe: feare had the precedencie before, whilst hee was held in suspense, and the issue of the Battell was doubtfull: anger tooke its place after, when hee had more leasure to thinke on *loath*: now griefe was predominant, which at the first did amaze him, and after vitered it selfe in teares and complaints: When a man hath some deepe gash, or sudden chop, you shall haue for the present a great silence,

silence; (as it were) and the flesh on each side will be warme and pale; and then sone after; the blood (which had carried the newes to the heart) issueth forth most furiously: such was *Dauid* wound in this place; the newes stricke into his heart, and astonished him for the time; but hauing a little recovered himselfe, hee powreth it forth, as you heare and see. Now, in that good *Dauid*; who is here termed the King; is found thus deeply wounded vpon the receipt of so heauie tidings; and weepes so bitterly vpon so neere an occasion, (I meane; the death of his dearest *Absalom*) let vs hence note this, in the generall, from the partie sorrowing, and the occasion and measure of his sorrow laid together; That Gods dearest children are exercised with neere and piercing crosses in this life. It may seeme to be no good congruitie, to say that *Dauid* wept; that King *Dauid* mourned: for Christians to moune, being poore, or Princes, being wicked, it is no strange matter. But when a man hath God for his friend in heauen; and a kingdom on earth too; what should trouble him? yet for such a one the Lord hath crosses, and those sharpe; those neere; those cutting. Witnesse *Dauid* (whom in question) a man after Gods heart. What a life had he in his father-in-law his time? When went he to bed with dring eyes? When liued he a merry day? What comfort in *Michal* his Wife? What troubles after *Sauls* death? What breaches in his family? What heart-breakings in his *Thamar*? In his *Amnon*? in his *Absalom*; whilst he liued? And now, when a man would haue thought him spent; and drawne drie; how many teares doth he spend afresh vpon his death? These crosses come close, cut deepe. Here are griefes; in his familiars shall I say? (nay) in his kinsfolkes, his father; his Wiues, at *Ziklag*, his children, his *Absalom*. And was not *Iacob* in the same case? Was it nothing to be roned from his owne Fathers House? To liue in feare of his owne Brother? To be so vsed by his owne Vnckle? To be so cozened of his owne Wife? To haue his onely Daughter deflowered? To haue his dearest Wife to dye so vpon his hands? To haue one sonne banished? Another an Adulterer? Another incestuous? many, Murderers? Neere Crosses;

*Doct. 1.*

Reade his life in the booke of *Samuel*.

Reade his storie from the 28. of *Gen* to the 46. Chapter.



when Vncle, when Cousins, when Wiues, when Children shall be our crosses. And what would you say of *Iob*, were his case your owne? It may be you would thinke it a losse, to part with so much Goods and Cattell so soone; to be worth a thousand pounds in the morning, and to haue all your grounds vnstockt by night: it may be it would trouble our patience, to heare the scornes of base fellowes, and to see that contempt in our owne seruants: but alas, if our kindest friends should quippe vs, and they that were religious, censure vs, if our owne Wiues should begin to be weary of vs, and wee should haue the burying of ten children; and first vnburie them, and there see how lowingly they lye together, and what prouision was there made for the cheering of their hearts, and here plucke out one, there another (perhaps) lim-meale, and lay them all on an heape; would not this haue wrought vpon vs? But then, if to all this, there should be added such plagues on the Bodie, such terrours on the Soule; would we not say our crosses were sharpe? Yes (brethren) wee may say that *Iobs* were sharpe, and sore, and neere, when Friends, when Seruants, when Children, when Wife, when God and all seeme to minister matter of griefe. It shall be needlesse to draw you further in examples; these are beyond exception, whether you looke to the goodnesse of the men, or the greatnesse of their crosses: in all whom wee see that verified, which once *Salomon* the sonne, and *Dauid* the father deliuered in more generall termes; the one, touching the number of the faithfull afflictions, that they come by seuens, (that is, troopes) in one and the same day; the other, touching both number and measure: that they are many and great, in number many, in nature weightie, as the word signifieth both. But leauing testimonies; What might be the cause that Gods best Children are so sped? Is it their Religion? Is it their profession? No, no, it is because they are set with corruption (if you will haue it all at once) and therefore must be purged: for first, (a little to enlarge our selues in the vnfoldings of some few, amongst many reasons) Gods best children will sometimes venture on noysome meates and hurtfull poysons, they

*Prou. 24. 16.*  
*Psal. 34. 19.*

*Reason 1.*

they will feed on the grosser finnes, they will drinke in vetric puddle, I meane iniquitie, and when the childe hath so done, what should the Father doe? If *Dauid* will lye and commit adulterie, and fall to murder innocents, what can God doe lesse for *Dauid*, vnlesse hee would haue him damned, than scourge him thorowly? What should he doe but lay it on his skinne, yea, and lash his conscience, and when hee will bee walking so neere hels mouth, take him by the heeles, and make him beleue he will throw him in? what though he doe crie? what though he be crossed of his will? Is it not better he should crie here than in hell? and receiue his payment here, rather than his iudgement there? Is it not better he should lose his sinne, than God his childe? So then, one cause why the Lord doth thus lay load on his children here is, because they defile themselues (sometimes) with grosse finnes, and therefore must haue much washing; they take the deadliest poyson, and therefore must haue working Physicke. *Dauid* was gone so farre this way, that to this place he hath not recouered himselfe, he deales not like old *Dauid* as yet, and therefore euery moneth almost hee must haue a purge; and whosoever he be that will venture after him in these dangerous paths, shall be sure to passe vnder the rod, as *Dauid* did, if he be Gods, as *Dauid* was. Secondly, Gods children, if they fall not to deadly poyson, yet will they surfet of lawfull meats and pleasures vnlawfully; so childish we are, when we are turned loose to delights, that for our liues wee cannot keepe a meane, wee cannot haue prosperitie but wee will abuse it, wee swell, we bragge, wee snuffe, wee looke ouer our brethren, and forget our selues, euen the best of vs all. Poore *Dauid*, that scarce euer came where prosperitie grew, had but a little rest, and hee began to dreame of golden mountaines, hee thought crosses had now taken their leaue of him, and would be afraid to looke into the Court, and therefore *Abfalom* is sent out of his bowels to confute him. And good *Hezechiah*, who was first humbled at the comming of *Senacherib*, and the second time brought to deaths doore by grievous sicknesse, had no sooner a little respit, but he begins to looke bigge, and to lay

*Psalm. 30.*

about him, when Ambassadors came to visit him, hee carries them from place to place, and sets the best side outward: he swaggers not only with them, but with *Esay* too; (who tookes as small pleasure in this his courting, as many of his cloth doe now in preaching: ) O *Esay* (saith hee) you cannot tell who hath bene here, great States; the King of Babel sent Ambassadors to vs, such Princes so farre from vs to take notice of vs; and they (I would haue thee know) were royally entertained: wee shewed them withall, what store of gold and siluer our treasures could afford; we would haue them know, that all the wit and wealth is not lodged in Babel, but that Gods people haue it in them and about them too, as occasion shall serue. Thus *Hezekiah* thought hee spake but reason: but the Lord seeing him so rancke, thinkes it time to let him bloud; and therefore *Esay* giues him a cooler: You haue made (saith he, for so in effect he speakes) a faire hand of your wealth, you haue; you haue brought the Wolfe to the fold, and now keepe him out if you can: Gold-thirstie Babel now knowes where to haue a draught: and as for your selfe, sith you thinke the better of your selfe for your wealth, the Lord hath made your Will, and the King of Babel is your executor. Thus because *Hezekiah* surferred, he is physickt: and this is another reason of the Lords thus dealing with his people, because the difference is not great, whether you eat bad meat, or surfet on good. Thirdly, God hath but need to dyet the best of vs sometimes, because we be so lazie when we are full, much like to a man that comes newly from a feast, fit for nothing; we follow our calling as if we would drop on sleepe, we performe exercises of Religion, as children say their lessons, minding euery thing rather than that in hand: wee come to the ordinances of God, as fed wantons to a Feast, nothing pleaseth, vlesse it be some odde sawce or new inuention, the worst dish on the table; so it is with vs, when we come to the Word, the sense must bee pleased, as well as the heart edified, else it is but a drie feast; one tricke of wit doth more affect, than twentie gracious sentences: now, when the Lord sees our mouth so faire out of taste, that it cannot relish

lish our meat, and discouers in vs such a lazinesse about our businesse, hee thinkes it reason to provide some remedie in time, lest those fore-runners of sicknesse breake forth into worse inconueniencies; and surely *Dauid* practice and case may affright vs all; for (alas) how did he gather mud, when he had stood still a while? and how would his corruptions againe haue growne to some head, had not *Abfalom* beene raised vp to breathe him, and to disperse them? Now if *Dauid* were so foggie after so many breathings, *Dauid*, a man of so good a dyet; how restie should wee be, if neuer walkt? how grounded on our lees with *Moab*, if neuer turned forth from vessell to vessell? It stands the Lord therefore vpon, if he will provide for his haruest, and our good, to take some paines with vs, lest otherwise he faile of his vintage, whilst we want dressing.

Fourthly, (and in a word) crosses had need to come, and come thicke, and come in strength to the strongest of vs, because in the best there be many and strong corruptions: O the pride, the pride, the vnbeleefe, the ignorance, the false-loue that lodges in the purest soule! would yee not haue thought that *Dauid* by this time had almost emptied himselfe of all pride, that all passions, all loue of the world, all carnall affections, had beene well-neere buried? but see, see when crosses come, how he layes about him, he sobs, he roares, hee would die in a passion, as if hee knew not what hee did, cared not what hee said: Now should not such a stomacke as this be taken downe? Yes, the childe had beene spilt there, if the rod had beene spared: and therefore God layes it on. Now if good *Dauid* after so much breaking and so long standing in Religion, be so waspish, so impatient, so passionate, doe not you thinke that there is some store in vs? let vs be crossed a little, cannot we chafe? let vs be abused, cannot wee finde our tongues? adde to this our worldlinesse, cannot we be content to liue longer in this world (bad though it be?) doe we not dote too much on one *Abfalom* or other? be not our hearts yet vnbroken? why then you see, God must smite, and smite againe, and smite home, and draw bloud: for no vnfound heart must goe to heauen, as none

but sound hearts must come hither; sound (I say) from hypocrisie, but broken with sinne and sorrow: thus wee see great cause of great affliction on Gods part, sith our sinnes are great which must be purged and prevented, our surfers great which must be cured, our deadnesse great which must be quickened, our inside bad which must be cleansed. Time will not giue to speake of all: one more reason shall bee drawne from our owne practice, and so an end. As God layes many crosses on vs, so wee may thanke our selues for many too, not onely in that wee doe deserue them, but in that we worke them out of our owne bowels: for many we draw vpon our selues by riot, idlenesse, vnthriftinesse, rage, &c. and the most wee make more heauie (that are heauie enough already) through our owne folly, and that is whilest we rake into our wounds, looking no higher, and what with vnbelcefe and impatience, doe double the crosse on our selues. *Dauids* burthen was heauie enough already, hee did not need to increase it: yet such is *Dauids* weaknesse, hee cannot choose, it is his *Absalom*, prettie *Absalom*, and therefore hee must pay for his passions; and thus, when God afflicts vs in measure, (as euer he doth his children) we make our crosses beyond measure, because wee keepe no meane in mourning; and not onely so, but wee prouoke our Father to giue vs somewhat for brawling and for strugling: and thus wee see some reasons of our so great and neere afflictions, taken partly from our selues, partly from our God. The wicked will haply thinke themselues wronged, that wee giue not them and their master the credit of the Saints troubles: but (to speake properly) they are no causes, but onely executioners, they are Hangmen and Bedles; when an execution is to be wrought, and the Lord hath assigned some of his shrewdest children to punishment, they shall haue the office sometimes to be the Gaoler or Belman, that is their preferment. Leauing therefore these scullians in the kitchen, there to scoure a vessell or licke a dish, when they shall be called vpon, let vs make our vse of this so large a Doctrine, and see whether wee can bee briefer there. First then;



Is this so, that Gods dearest children haue and must haue such great and piercing crosses in this life? Then must all who would be knowne by that name, make account of such, and prepare for them. Such is our folly (for the most part) when the Sunne shines, we neuer thinke of a darke night, and when the morning is faire, wee neuer feare a storme, and therefore are sometimes taken without our cloake (as it were.) Such also is our conceit of our selues, and confidence in worldly helps, that we hope they will not see vs want; or if they faile, yet we thinke to shifte better than others can, and to liue by our wits: hence it is, that we are almost growne to Babels conclusion; Though others be widowes, fatherlesse, childlesse, comfortlesse; yet wee shall see no sorrow. But it will be granted (I trow) that our nature needs physicke, as much as other mens, (there is no difference in the mould) and that our carriage hath not beene so good, but that iustly wee may feare some bruthing. It may be, *Dauid* was as honest a man as some of vs, perhaps *Hezekiah* was not farre behinde vs, possible *Paul* might match vs in any grace, and haue as little pride, hypocritie, selfe-loue, passion in him, as the best of vs all; yet were these (holy men) greatly afflicted and wondrously straitned, and why should we dreame of peace? If wealth would discharge a man of crosses, *Hezekiah* was not poore: if honour, *Dauid* was a King: if either wit or grace, *Paul* was no babe: but these will not serue the turne, Kings children must haue physicke (if sicke) as well as poorer mens; why should they not? So must the Lords. Our Prince is consecrated through afflictions, our way is an afflicted way (as you would say) and it is the voice of heauen, that thorow many tribulations wee must enter into heauen. Now then, such the case so stands, thareither wee must disclaime the right of children, or else endure afflictions, either passe vnder the rod, or be bastards, let vs (vnlesse wee meane to shame our selues) arme our selues for crosses before-hand, and not prepare only, but prepare for all, yea the neere of all. For what hath befallen *Dauid* and others, why may not the same befall vs? Some wiues haue great crosses in their husbands, some husbands in their wiues, some parents in children,

*Matth 7. 14.*

dren; some children in parents, some are neerely toucht in their bodie, some in their estate, some other in their name, in their soule other some; and where is our discharge? who hath exempted vs? may not wee need them as much as others? doth not God loue vs as well as others? are not these things written for our vse? O then let vs thinke on these things in this our peace, and now lay in for a rainy day, now whilest wee can pray, now whilest our bodies are free from distemper, and our affections from trouble; now whilest we are our owne men, and haue freedome (as it were) of heart; now let vs boord vp prayers against the time of trouble, when as either in respect of sicknesse in bodie, or sorrow of minde, wee can say no more than *Dauid* now can (my sonne, my sonne, my paine, my paine, my heart, my heart.) Now let vs treasure vp faith, and patience, and wisdom, as *Ioseph* did Come, such a day of vterance will come, a day of spending not of getting, a day wherein our owne stocke and the Churches treasury too (I meane, others prayers) will be little enough: doe not thinke it sufficient to haue somewhat before-hand; wee are not at agreement with Croesus, to depart when we giue warning: neuer forget *Dauid*, a man not meapely graced; nay, a great Husband, who had his soule well stockt, and in good plight; and yet how vnhandlome-ly doth he now behaue him selfe? Ah *Dauid*, thou wast wont to haue prayers and gracious meditations as readie as *Abners* Sword, that would drop out of the sheath: but now, here is nothing but, my sonne, my sonne; and little doe we know how we shall sling out in distresses, vnlesse we are very well appointed. Now lastly, whilest the Lord doth offer himselfe vnto vs as a louing Father, let vs come vnto him, like obedient children; let vs confesse against our selues, and reconcile our soules vnto him: Let vs seeke vnto him (as once the *Sidonians* did to *Herod*) through Christ (as they through *Blastus*) for his fauour (as they for *Herods* loue,) and then being at peace with him in our peace, and acquainted with him in our prosperitie, he will know our soules in aduersitie, and we shall alwayes haue a Rocke to flye vnto in the greatest waues and surges. Thus wee see what course must bee

taken

taken if crosses shall not hit vs on the bare, and take vs on the blinde side: the practice welput vpon you, as you loue your ease; for there is little comfort to be hoped for in crosses, vnllesse there be some preparation for them. Men may thinke themselues armed, when they haue men and money to befriend them: but then (neuer till then) are wee fitted for crosses, when God and our owne consciences are friends with vs, and stand for vs: and therefore if wee will make sure worke, let vs goe to heauen for friends, not to the earth; and be more carefull to get grace in our hearts, than gold in our chests; for crosses bee as the minde and man be, not as the outward estate. And this is the first vse that I would haue made of this point. The second standeth thus:

Is this so, that the dearest of Gods children haue great and neere afflictions in this life? then this must teach the wicked to leaue iudging abroad, and to looke home-ward: they are on horsebacke, they, when Gods children are vnderfoot; it is their ioy to see the faithfull grieue, they cannot hold but roke it out; These (say they) be the fellowses these Preachers so much magnifie, these the happy ones, these goe away with all the comforts, they cannot doe amisse, they; but by your leaue, such a iudgement hath befallen one, such a plague another; and which of them escapes better? and this they get by running to Sermons: and thus they triumph. But stay a while, and pause better on the matter: Are Gods children thus wounded? what shall become of his enemies? are the righteous thus paid? how much more the sinner? Is this done to the greene tree? Doth the Lord thus visit those vpon whom his Name is called? doth iudgement thus beginne at Gods House? where shall the wicked appeare? are infirmities accompanied with crosses? what will be the end of idolatry, of blasphemie, of murder, of adultery, of oppression? Are the wayes to Sermons thus strewed with crosses? what shall be found in the wayes of whoredome, of blood, of drunkenness, &c. Was *David* for murder and adultery once committed, thus entertained? what will they end be, who still liuest in the ordinary practice of such like sinnes? Yea, answer this (if thou

cant) are Gods owne people, who haue the Spirit of God to pray in them, Christ, and all the Saints on earth to pray for them, who iudge themselves dayly, who walke constantly with God, (are they) thus handled, in case they doe at any time breake forth? then tell me what thy doome is like to be, who neuer prayest, neuer repentest, neuer striuest against sinne, but hast sold thy selfe to doe wickedly. Goe on then, with thy tale, Gods children are afflicted, and greatly afflicted too; I will grant you all; but woe you what? If Gods children (whom hee loues next vnto himselfe in Christ) cannot be exempted from crosses, (bitter crosses) notwithstanding all their repentance, all their teares, all their prayers, but their soules shall groane, and hearts ake, because they be so stubborn, and performe holy duties no more, no better; I report me to thee, whether thou dost not thinke that Gods iustice will one day haue thy blood, thy life, thy soule, for all thine abominations which thou dost not repent for, but laughst at, which thou dost not pray against, that they may be pardoned, but frettest that they should be disgraced, and which thou art so farre from leauing, that thou couldest drinke his blood that reprocues them in thee. And if so, then either make vse of the faithfuls troubles, and quickly iudge thy selfe, or else take euery disgrace, euery disease, euery affliction that befalls them, to bee a pledge of that euerlasting shame, and those euerlasting torments, woes, plagues, curses that shall seize vpon thee for euermore. I know thy plea, before thou speakest, but (alas) it will not hold; Christ (thou wilt say) will haue all, hee died for sinners, and what needs all this? And did hee so? could not Christ, when hee stood in our roome, and sustained the person of a sinner, (though in himselfe sinlesse) could not hee (though he were the deire and first borne) escape, vntill his blood was shed, and flesh rent, and soules powred forth as an offering? then either make it good, that thou art in Christ, and become a new creature, or else take thy leave of all hope and comfort; nothing remaines, but a fearefull expectation of iudgement. And that is thy vse, a third we thus inferre, but briefly.

(finis)

In this the estate of the most godly and best beloved in this life; then, as this must teach vs to thinke neuer the worse of our felues or others for outward crosses, (which like hail and snow doe light vpon the bearded den, as well as on the wilde waste; and like blustering winds, will spare no more Princes children than the poorest beggers) sith thus we cannot conclude, vnlesse we will either challenge Gods loie, or the best Christians truth; euen *Dauid*, *Rauls*, &c. so must it cause vs to looke vpwards, to wait for our redempti on, and to sigh for heauen, where we shall be free from all these miseries. When we are from home amongst our friends, our hearts are still homewards, though our company be good, our welcome kinde; our entertainment of the best, faire lodging, all better than any we shall finde at home; yet home is homely (say we) and away we goe; intreaty will not fetch vs againe: Now if we can be content to change for the worse, because the one is our home for a few dayes; how much should we desire heauen (the onely true mansion) whiche we are sure to change all for the better; where our estate shall be bettered; and our companie; and our bodies; and our soules; how ought we to reach after this, and to thirst after it? If *Dauid* panted after the Suburbs; the Church in earth; what should our affection be towards the Citie itselfe? If *Moses* preferred the Saints troubles before the treasures of Egypt; what treasures on earth should keepe out desires from the glorious estate of Christ in heauen? and if the Queene of *Sheba* was content to goe from home, and from much of her wealth, that so she might be acquainted with *Salomon*; why should not we desire home; that we might grow acquainted with Iesus Christ, and see him face to face? especially, sith in this iourney we shall part with nothing but what we may well spare, sinne and corruption; how thankfull ought we to be for Gods mercy, that whereas our fathers liued some five hundred, some six hundred, some more yeeres, and serued along apprenticeship, the Lord graciously hath shortened our lease; and calls vs from this troublesome Sea, into the Hauen, by that time they were well spent. This is a matter that should moue



what refresh vs in this our iourney, and worke those to patience who cry at the mention of heauen, How long? Truth it is (to speake one word to them) the earth is tedious to such as haue beene in heauen, they doe not like to bee pilgrimes here, when once they are enrolled Citizens there: but sith we shall (hereafter) bee alwayes receiuing wages, why should we not be pleased to doe a little worke? and sith our God hath cut off so many of our sorrowfull dayes, why should not we with cheerefulnesse bestow these few vpon him? I know, no affliction is for the present ioyous, all are tedious: but if we will but looke forward, and fasten our eyes vpon that Crowne and Kingdome that shall so shortly come into our hands; and backward, and see our desert, and what others haue left, how we fare and lie and goe euery day better than Christ here did (the most of vs,) our crosses will not seeme so strange, as Gods mercies and patience towards vs. wonderfull. As for that crosse of crosses, (sinne and corruption) whereof you would be so gladly eased, (alas) how should I comfort you against that? I cannot blame you, nor maruell at it, if you be willing to be any where (much more in heauen) so you may be rid of sinne, that indeed is a bad neighbour, which will put a man to *Rebbeccaes* complaint, I am wearie of my life: but yet (my brethren) sith we doe but drinke as we brewed, nay, sith the Lord mingled this worm-wood with so many sweets, and much allayed the strength thereof: sith these our corruptions haue receiued their morall wounds, and are now breathing out their last breath: sith the Lord will so suddenly dispatch them in comparison of former times, and long we shall not dwell together: sith he sees some vse of this poyson, and turneth that to good (a common good) which in it selfe is hurtfull: sith further he hath giuen vs some graces, as he hath left in vs (for our exercise) some corruptions: sith (lastly) grace hereafter shall onely come in question, and our debts shall be set vpon anothers score; and for the present, he puts a difference betwixt vs and sinne in vs, (as betwixt poyson and the box that holds it) let vs haue patience towards him (though not towards sinne) and so fall out with corruption, that we for-

get not mercies: But I haue stept a little aside to call vpon some friends: I now proceed. Hauing thus dispatcht the first thing growing out of these circumstances named, we must come to a second, which is almost as generall (for when should we haue done, if we should descend to particulars?) This that we may make way vnto, let's a little view *Dauids* behauiour in this his distresse. There is none of vs can deny, but his occasion of griefe was great; great reason he had to mourne, who saith to the contrary? It was no small crosse to see ones childe die in such a quarrell: but yet there is a meane in all things (as the prouerbe runneth) his behauiour is very strange, his mourning not like *Dauids*: for whereas this riuer and flood of teares may seeme to be fed from a three-fold spring, flesh, nature, and grace, and so his sorrow to be partly spirituall, for *Abfaloms* soule; partly naturall, in that he was his sonne; partly carnall, in that he was his *Abfalom*: yet the truth is, his sorrow is rather carnall than otherwise, if the parts be considered: for first, nature goes not so farre as to wish the destruction of it selfe, as *Dauid* here doth; O that I were dead, dead for thee, or in thy stead: and as for grace, it would neuer bring forth such fruits of passion, as to wish death in discontentment, nor proueoke to whining in this vnderent manner, but would haue composed the affections rather, and haue taught him to mourne in silence. Besides, his sorrow is too much to be good, and comes with too much ease from him, and is too soone ripe to be spirituall fruit. Howsoeuer then we deny not, but *Dauid* was a sanctified man, and so had sanctified affections, and withall was full of naturall affection, yet in this particular, and at this instant, he was more vnaturall to himselfe, than naturall to his sonne, and bewrayed more flesh for the present by farre, than spirit; yea, that so drowned this, that the motions thereof could not as yet be heard. Now this light being thus giuen to the words following, you see the points doe offer themselves so fast vnto vs, and come so thicke vpon vs, that wee know not well which to receiue, and what to put backe. This (if you say the word) shall lead the way: In that this man (no worse a

o. 7. 1.

man than *David*; this exceeds in sorrow vpon this occasion, in so carnally a manner: but we deaie; That Gods best children are apt to grieve too much; and to exceed in passion for outward things; as in mirth; when once we are in, we are apt to forget our felices; so in sorrow; when once we yeeld vnto it, wee are in danger of forgetting vpon it. A man would thinke that *David* should be as little troubled with this disease, any man living; for which he you looke to nature or grace, the banks of his heart to be so sound; that no excess of sorrow can ouerflow them: for first, if you looke to complexion, hee seems to be made of the lightest timber, a man whose ruddy face seems to promise a resolute and cheerefull heart; if you looke to naturall helpe; his skill in musicks (to say nothing of any else) was nor ordinary; and as for spirituall medicines, the best medicines to cure diseases, the King was behind none in these matters: his graces were very eminent, his experience much; and yet if *David* will but stand a while on crosses, nay, if he will but be prepared for them, it is strange to see how unlike himselfe he is, he cries as if he had bene strickt. In the next Chapter he takes vp the same note againe: nay, he will die; forsooth; he will be gone, he will to his home: and why? he is his *Ab-salam*. And what thinke you of *Iob*? the Lord himselfe giues him a good report; out of doubt he was an honest man; but did you euer heare a wise man so farre forget himselfe? hee is angry with the light, quarrels with the night; hath a saying to the staires, to his mother, to the midwife; there is no dealing with him in his fit; and yet the occasion outward. Instances of this kinde there bee more than enow, but they are vnpleasant; and therefore I will content my selfe with one more, and that is *Ionah*, as strange a man, of an honest man, as you haue highly heard of. This *Ionah* was crossed (as he thought) first in his credit: How bare he that? vnwardly enough; the matter seemed naught, starke naught to him (saith the Text,) he chafed exceedingly: and what was the matter? the Lord preferred many mens soules before the satisfying of his lust; a great matter; yet this man would not brooke it: at Gods hand, till the Lord tooke him downe:

Ionah 4. 1.

downe well, the ſecond time he was croſſed in his eaſe, and a rooſe (I cannot tell what to terme it, whether tree, or ſhrub, or ſtalke; a triſle it was, which he pleaſed to fancie for his turne) but would you thinke that a Prophet would chaſt at the loſſe of ſuch a thing? why, this and his heat put him into his old tune againe, he will be dead in a paſſion; God comes to pacifie him, it will not be, hee is angry, he hath reaſon to be angry, hee will be angry, yea, would he could burſt and kill himſelfe with anger. What is the matter? It is belike for ſome great ſinne, becauſe hee hath offended God: no (ſir) he is the Plaintiffe, God had rather (in his conceit) treſpaſſed him: and this is *Iſaiah*: let vs ſtay in him (for we can hardly match him, and yet a good man). What may be the reaſon of theſe exceſſive fits for outward things? The reaſons are many; amongſt many theſe are ſome: firſt, a great miſtaking and error in iudgement, wee ouer-prize theſe outward things, and promiſe to our ſelues that from them, which neuer aſſy found in them: and therefore wee ouergueſſe, when wee are diſappointed of them. Thus *Dauid* thinkeſ *Abaſalom* the prettieſt fellow in a countrey, no man had ſuch a childe as was *Abaſalom*: and therefore when he is dead, *Dauid* cannot liue: thus becauſe the iudgement makes too great a report of outward things to the affection, the affection makes too great a doe about them; the one being blinded, the other is bewitched: and that is a ſecond reaſon (ſith we are ſalne into it) namely the diſtemper of the affections; when we haue outward bleſſings, we loue them but too well; and therefore when we loſe them, we grieve too much; for make a breach in our affection, and you weaken all; as the whole army is weakened if any part be diſordered, the whole building is weak for the removing of ſome one ſtone, and the whole body infewbled by the wounding of one part. Thus becauſe *Dauid* will paſſe ouer his affections to his ſonne in his life time, and ſetle his abode in *Abaſalom*, he cannot be maſter of them, nor command them when he is dead: he will be ſond; while he hath *Abaſalom*, no body muſt touch him, the winde muſt not blow vpon him, therefore hee will extremely lament when hee loſeth him,

Chap. 4.

Reason 1.

him, and no body must comfort him, because his *Absalom* is not. Adde vnto this, in the third place, the deceitfulnesse of our owne heart, which doth but coozen vs, and the subtiltie of the Deuill, who to the end hee may carry vs headlong with the whirle-wind of passion into a Sea of troubles, will beare vs in hand, that we haue reason to grieue, and to bee passionate. Thus *Jonah* stands vnto his cause, and being drunken with passion, hee cannot see but hee hath the better of God: Thus *David* (had a man clozed with him, and asked him what he meant to be so loud?) would quickly haue been his tales-master. What, (would he haue said) would you haue me vn sensible of such a stroke as this? Is there nothing to be done by the Parent, when the Lord thus singles out his Childe? Ought not the Father to take notice of it? especially I must, sith I did not the part of a Father to him: he should, ere this, haue beene executed for his sinnes; I let him runne on, but now the Lord hath met with him and me too, to my woe: It is iust vpon me, and I am perswaded, I ought not to let it passe without some vse: I must grieue; and yet, were I sure his soule were now in heauen, I would care the lesse: but (alas) the example is fearefull, so to liue, so to dye. Faire words (good *David*;) he speaks as he thinkes (good man) but he knowes not his owne heart. Is this the cause that you would haue died for him? Was it because he had sinned? because you had failed in dutie? (alas) what could your death doe for his soule, or your owne discharge? No, no: he was your darling, you cannot spare him, you must alwayes beare him in your eye; hence those teares: And thus we runne on many times in a tale, and would faine perswade our selues, that what we doe, is done with iudgement; when (God knowes) our sorrow is as full of flesh, as *Dauids* here was: And thus, what through the error of our mindes, and disorder of our affections, and deceitfulnesse of our owne hearts, and Satans cunning, it comes to passe, that we are in the depth of sorrow and passion (as the *Aramites* in the midst of *Samarina*) before we know where we be.

*Ipsa* 1.

Now this being so, that the best of vs all are subiect to immoderate sorrow for outward things, we must not onely learne



learne to beare with one another in this our common frailtie, but further every one for himselfe must fence and mounde his heart against these absurd passions and excessive griefes. Many outward things be base, (in respect of man) that they should not once shone him; they be not worthy his cares or thoughts, unfit to be lodged in the meanest roome of mans soule; to quaine them the same day with man; were to sit them about their place in the bestow places on these, were to wash stables with sweet water, but worth the while, nor the cost. All of them are but fringe, none absolutely good, and therefore our griefe for them must be limited with respects; and with great moderation, else it will degenerate and turne carnall. Seemeth now, if I see the time to plead, that our sadnesse hurteth no bodie but our selues; and that therein wee are enemies to none but to our selues: for were this a true plea, yet were it insufficient; for who giue vs a commission to hurt our owne persons, and to practise murder upon our owne bodies? But this is not all: for besides a priuate wrong, wee rob God of his glorie, and men of that seruice we owe vnto them; indeed, worldly sorrow makes vs both vnthankfull to God, and vnprofitable to man, and vnaturall to our selues, (as hence might be shewed, but we cannot stand on all,) and therefore let vs striue against it. Let vs, (will some man say) let vs as we can but how should we be armed against the excessse of worldly sorrow? Can you giue mee any preseruatiues against it? Answer: Some we will, many we might, but so farre as wee practise these following, we shall be fited of this vnprofitable guest.

First, let vs deny our selues in all worldly matters, and not engage our affections vnto them, either to be eagerly set vpon them when we haue them in chace, or to be foolishly puffed vp with them, when wee haue them in possession; for if we doe not leaue them, till they leaue vs, it is sure they will leaue vs in the lurch in the end: witnesse *David*; *Abulom* was gone ere *Dauid* had denied himselfe in *Abulom*, and therefore now here is nothing but roaring, whereas if he before had sacrificed his name, and crucified his affection;



you see, *Abraham* is named (as they say Popes be) by contraries, his name and nature agree like a boat-man and his words, that take two contrary ways; poor *David* with nothing less than that he expected; *Levi* learns some wisdom from his misery; let vs not become libertines for the world in a debt of comfort; but rather suspect it, and correct our selves; saying, I now take some comfort in this child; I place my selfe in this outward blessing; but let me be moderate; who knows what sorrow is now bred in these dayes? Thus if wee could fore-cast perils before they come; and be well appointed to receive them when they doe come, wee might better quit our selves in crosses than usually we doe; but when wee are in foolishly, we cannot heare on that side: O spare your speech, or else your selfe my heart: Doe you say that I must part with my husband, and burie my childe? What my *Abraham*? I hope I shall neuer liue to see that day, at least not yet a while; and thus you will not heare of crosses till they come, and then you cannot beare them; because they come so suddenly: Others know well enough there must be a time of parting, what need you tell them that? But in the meane you must beare with them, for in truth they cannot choose but doe their friends, and take their part in all God sends; (as if there were no difference betwene loving and loving; but we are moderate drinking and excessive drunkenness) and they doe not doubt; but when God calls them to crosses, hee will sit them for crosses; and thus they stand on. But is it likely that hee will beare afflictions patiently, who cannot with patience heare them spoken of? Is this the way to be furnished for winter, to sit still and say, If God will me to winter, hee will fit me for winter; and in the meane time make no provision; but say, Whiles he sends warme and drie weather, I will take my part? No, in Summer thou must thinke of Winter; in thy prosperitie, of aduersitie; else thou wilt be soone in *David* time; and so thou shalt be in *David* time.

Secondly, we must haue a speciall eye to our dealings in our ward matters, that we doe not abuse them to Gods dishonour; nor defile them with sinne and wickedness; for their

if we be crossed in them, we shall soundly smart for it, because those crosses will come with a sting: *Dauid* was not so found in the matter of *Ierusalem*, as with our credence he might haue been; and therefore *Ierusalem* sticks by him longer than he should: And (surely becauise) of these are like piercing frosts, they will sear, they will scald us where we be most un-foinde; we shall soonest paine, and where most corruption lyes, there we shall most smart like when the burden comes. Would we not cherograte too much, for but woe things? Let vs not stie in the use of them: Would we keepe our carnall sorrow, & keepe our cursed hane, if we let this canker eat into our hearts, Gods medicines must pierce as deepe, else what recovery? Build on this, (brethren), sinne alwayes makes way for sorrow; in that measure that sinne paines vs, crosses will sting vs; this is a true saying, and of all men to be beleued. But I am slow.

3 A third remedie is this; wee must breake the stream of our afflictions, and turne our sorrow vpon our sinne, and place al our happines in *Iesus Christ*; so we shall be sure that our sorrow shall be alwayes moderate; so shall we be freed from the worst of sorrowes, that which is false and imaginarie; for true sorrowe is vpon false, as *Esau* and the *Egyptians*; and false is such moyle, hurtfull and violent than true, as bugbeeres more affright children than true men. Again, godly sorrow kills worldly grieffe, as spirituall ioy murtheres carnall mirth: let sinne lye heauie, and outward crosses will be light; imburie that thou hast displeased God, and defaced his image, and thou wilt haue double pleasure to moue for worldly matters againe; if *Christ* be all thy ioy, and a lla hie comfort be shut vp in the Lord, thou canst neuer be left comfortlesse, with *Christ* neuer lyes in thee, and for thee. But here is the spight, we do mistake the warke, wee passe sinne, and spend our sorrow on the world, we loose *Christ*; and be-  
 flow our afflictions else where, hence wee are to looke of comfort when wee shou'd use it, and lose our labour in sorrowing amisse. Thus *Dauid* bestirres him for *Ierusalem*, and when all is done, he must vnwinde and vnwrap, all againe. How happie wee, if we now learne to place our ioy and sor-

row aright. Lastly, if worldly sorrow shall not beare vs downe, let vs be much in conference with God, and in the practice of holy duties, pray much, abound in thanksgiving: this is *Pauls* prescription to the *Philippians*. You may write *probationest* vpon the head of it; for there is no crosse so great vnder the cope of heauen, but prayer and thanksgiving will lighten it; as there is none so easie, but plodding and vnthankfulnesse will make it heauie. Let then our complaints be made to God, and let that time which is spent in aggrauating crosses and vnkindnesses, bee spent in recounting mercies and deliuerances, and then crosses will bee as small in our esteeme, as they bee in truth: and had *Dauid* thought on this, to haue cried, O my Sonne *Salomon*, in stead of *Abfalom*, and seene Gods merite in the one, as well as Gods iustice in the other; and in this heat of passion drawne himselfe into Gods presence, and lifted vp one faithfull prayer, these stormes would haue vanished (as a mist before the Sunne) and he would haue saued himselfe a great deale of paines: but he cannot as yet pray, and therefore as yet here is no comfort. O let our sorrowes bring vs speedily to God, and then comfort will come riding vpon the Clouds towards vs! Let vs presently fall to prayer and thanksgiving, as once *Job* did, and betake our selues to the Word and promise, or to some holy conference, when our fits doe come vpon vs, and we shall quickly breake the course and strength of them. Thus if we will learne to deny our selues in worldly things, vsing them so, that we abuse them not; if we will thinke on crosses before they come, and not leaue all till afterward; if wee will be iust in getting, and vpright in vying the things of this life, that we doe not enueuome them with sinne; if we will bestow our sorrow on our sinne, and make that our chiefest griefe and greatest crosse; if (lastly) we will be much in prayer, thanksgiving, meditation of the Word, &c. our strength will be so much against crosses (at least) our comfort in them, that wee shall not need to feare any hurt from them, but may comfortably expect benefit by them: sure it is, if these meanes keepe vs not drie-shod, they will keepe our head aboue water, wee shall be but washed with

A. 27.



*Paul*, not drowned. And this of that vs; you shall finde me brieve in all that followes. A second vs is this:

Doe Gods best children exceed sometimes in sorrow for outward things? then must wee not be altogether discouraged, though wee finde our worldly griefe more than our spirituall sorrow, for this is a thing that may befall the best, they may be immoderate in the one, when they are too short in the other: the best haue many teares to bestow vpon some outward things, when they cannot without much trauell weepe for their many finnes; was not this sometime good *Dauids* case? But is not this (will some say) a vile thing, that wee should more grieue for outward things, than for sinne against God? It is so, and doth not shew that we are wonderful carnall? It doth so: why then, what then? How can I be Gods childe? why? how is *Dauid*? did you euer heare him more lowd for his sinne than here for *Absalom*? did he not weepe at *Ziklag* for outward things, till he could weepe no more? And yet for all this, I would not say that *Dauid* loued outward things more than God; or that his finnes lay lighter than his crosses: for first, hee had more sorrow for his sinne, than he should or would haue had for outward losses, when he was *Dauid*. Secondly, a little godly sorrow is more than a great doale of worldly; more (I say) in substance, though not in bulke, as a little balme water is worth a poole of mud, a little gold comes to more than a great deale of brasse. Thirdly, his carnall and worldly sorrow was but a sudden storme, a Land-flood; his spirituall a constant guest; though it were composed and silent, (as the deepest waters are most still) yet was it deepe and soaking. Now what wee say of *Dauid*, the same (if you change the name) must be vnderstood of euery good Christian, who is not to be considered according to that hee is when hee is drunken with passion, but according to that hee is when hee is his owne man and in his wits: neither must wee looke what men doe, but what they meane and would doe: and therefore so long as we desire to make our sinne our greatest sorrow, and iudge our selues for our securitie, so long as we giue all entertainment to godly sorrow,

and

and stand to keepe out worldly, wee are in Gods account more spirituall than carnall: as with men, hee that keepe a constant house all the yeare, is said to keepe a better house than he that layes it on once in a twelue-moneth. And this for that point. Now it follows:

*O my sonne*] From *Dauids* mourning and behaiour in this particular, let vs note one thing more: you heare the man, you see his behaiour: was *Dauid* wont to beare crosses so? nothing so: but you see how it fares with him now, he cannot helpe it. Hence learne wee, that Gods children, who beare some crosses with great wisdom and moderation, are sometimes foiled in other some, and faile in both. Who could behaue himselfe better than *Dauid*, in the matter of *Shimei*? Who worse, in the case of *Nabal*? how sweet his carriage in many passages betweene *Saul* and him? how admirable his behaiour in one childe's death? how absurd in anothers? nay, how diuerly affected with the cause of one and the same *Abshalom*? while gracious speeches did he once utter, when he fled from *Abshalom*? what a beadle haue we here, at his death? who could more forget himselfe than here hee doth, thus to take on at such a time, in such a place, on such an occasion? How farr was this from poe-  
cie? how farr vnlike his carlage in other places? good *Dauid*, the same that would make to heauen at other times, so soone as the crosse had giuen him summons; the same that was vsed to beare afflictions as patiently, as hee beares this (to say no more) immoderately. And touching *Iob*, could any man liuing behaue himselfe better in some crosses? In all this (saith the Lord, summing vp his behaiour in the first conflict) did not *Iob* sinne, nor shew the least folly; in charging folly vpon God: In all which? Not in all that first conflict, wherein he was so neerely toucht, in his goods and children; but his behaiour it was most religious, hee humbled himselfe and worshipped; his speeches very gracious: The Lord hath done all, becaus righteous in all, and blessed be his Name. Thus *Iob* at that time, on that occasion: but how afterward? Who hee? hee challengeth God into the Schooles, to dispute it out; if he would not take the challenge,

*Doct. 3.*

Reade 1 Sam.  
25. & 2 Sam.  
16, &c.  
2 Sam. 12, &c.  
2 Sam. 15, 26,  
&c.

*Iob 1. ult. vers*

See chap. 13. 3.  
16. 21. & 23 30.  
45, &c.

it was because he was not able to stand vnder his arguments. The like may be said of *Ishah*, a man of good behauiour: in the first Chapter, he makes an honest confession both of his Faith and of his fault, settles himselfe to die, and lookes as if he would to heauen anon; but at another time, in a smaller crosse, he is no more like himselfe, than an Apple is like a Nut; he chides hand-smooth with God, and will stand to it that God knowes not when a man speaks reason; if hee would terme him vreasonable in his passion. But what might be the reason (to passe more instances) of this so wide a difference? What might be the cause that these so worthy champions are thus sometimes foiled? I will tell you: first, It pleaseth God sometimes to set on a crosse, and to make it sticke by a man, either because the same partie would looke besides former crosses, or kicke them off too lightly, or else because hee would let him see himselfe, and know what hee is of himselfe, or for some other cause vknowne to vs, but alwayes iust in it selfe, and well knowne to God: Now, if hee purpose so to doe, either to withdraw his assistance, or to increase the smart, alas, who can stand vnder it? and thus wee see Gods best children more troubled now and then with a trifle (in comparison) than with the greatest torments at another time; and as Christs looking backe on *Peter*, did more affect him and worke vpon him when hee pleased to worke with it, than many words did at another time; so many times a word misplaced, a countenance misse-set, doth more gall vs, than twentie greater matters, (when God is pleased to pay vs) because euert that is the crosse which he will make the crosse, that most pierceth which he sharpneth most.

Reasons .1.

- 2 Sometimes wee haue not denied our selues in some particular lust, and then if a crosse light there, it soone enters and eats deepe, because wee our selues doe geue a sting vnto it; an affection vnmortified, is as soone wounded as a scalded head is broken: thus, if you had hit *Danid* any where else, he had bene for you, hee could haue borne it; but if you touch his *Abfalom*, you pare the quicke, you touch his life. Sometimes againe our crosses doe not matter

vs,

vs, they doe but nettle vs, and then they raise those tempests which they cannot lay; they doe but bait, they doe not worrie, our corruptions, and so they make vs chafe. Thus (in *Elihu's* iudgement at least) the cause why *Iob* did so bestirre him and lay about him, was, because God had not dealt in extremitie with him. Thus *Ionah*, who was tamed when he should be drowned, was a little too lustie for a Gourd. And surely (brethren) if our crosses were sometimes more, I doe not thinke but our fits would be fewer, our outward carriage (at least) better. Three ierkes (sometimes) make the child yeeld, when one would make him dance and stampe. Lastly, crosses sometimes steale vpon vs before we haue armed our selues, and then it is a world to see how wee goe downe the winde: *Dauid* can say somewhat to this also; he was fitted for crosses, when the childe borne in adulterie died; his heart was softened, he had reason to expect its death, sith he was told no lesse. But here he lookes for no such matter: he giues in charge, that the young man *Abfalom*, (an old Traitor, though his Boy) should be looked vnto; he will not suffer himselfe to thinke that *Abfalom* must die; he will not be humbled for his fondnesse past, because he did not meane to amend it: and therefore this lies vpon him more heauie than sand; hee cannot beare it, as he bore the other. And thus must we leaue the point as wee found it at first; and tell our iudgements, that one crosse foiles vs, yea, layes vs on our backe, when another (perhaps a stronger) cannot stirre vs; because the Lord sets on one more than another, because wee are lesse sound in one place than another, because wee are lesse mastered by one crosse than another, because wee are lesse prepared for one than another.

*Iob 35. penult.*

2

2 Sam. 12.

Now the point is proued, let vs not suffer it to passe without some vse, though wee be the briefer. Leame hence at least a double point of wisdome: the first respects our brethren; them wee must not too lightly censure, for their weaknesse and tendernesse in some crosses; though light; sith that cannot be light, which God will make heauie; sith that may be light to one, which is as a mountain to another; sith those our brethren may manfully beare farre

*Vse 1.*

forer crosses than our selues, though humbled in some particular ; sith briefly, that which is heauy now, may anon be light to them ; and that which now is as a thing of nought to vs, may anon be somewhat, if God shall set it on. Soft then (my brethren) let vs not be too eager vpon *Dauid* : it may be wee haue buried no *Absalom* as yet, (at least dying in such a sort) it may be wee would haue buſſed more than *Dauid* did. Had *Shimei* so greeted vs, nor *Saul* so pursued vs ; like enough *Dauid* would haue bene at patience before vs, in twentie other crosses ; and so may our brethren too, euen those wee most censure : And therefore haue some patience and mercy toward the afflicted ; account not euery one proud, and carnall, and froward, that is foiled, when we stand.

- 2 The second lesson our selues must take forth, and make it our owne : and it lookes two wayes, as if it were on both sides the lease. First, if wee haue in some measure quitted our selues well in some one or few afflictions, wee must not presently triumph and grow secure, as if the day were ours : wee may now giue them the fall, and by and by be tript downe our selues, if wee looke not to our feet. *Dauid* is before vs herein : he fought more battels than twenty of vs, and that with great courage and good successe ; yet is not *Dauid* able to stand against this crosse : his *Absalom*, his *Absalom* could not be forgotten. And what though wee haue buried a friend ? It may be wee know not what it is to burie a Father, a Childe, a Wife, a Husband. If *Amnon* be dead, wee cannot tell what *Absalom* may worke, when his death shall be vntimely. Say pouertie be no great burden to vs, it may be paine and sicknesse will make vs roare : if these blow ouer, a slander vpon our names may haply trouble our patience : if wee can be patient when other mens faults are serued in to vs, and laid in our dish ; yet it may be wee shall not clawe it off so well, if our Kinsfolke, Seruants, Parents, Children, Yoke-fellowes, shall breake forth, and vntuzzle the wicked against vs. O then, let not him brag that puts on harnesse, more than he that puts it off : let no man be secure, but euer stand vpon his guard, still ready



die to receiue, and to ward these blowes that fall vpon him like haile and shot : and so if he doe, then on the other side, let him not cast away his buckler, because hee was raught a rap, but looke better to his hand another time. What though *Dauid* be now downe ? hee may rise againe for all this, and proue himselfe old *Dauid* still : though hee be a little eclipsed, yet may he shine forth afresh, and make many an holy Prayer and Psalmc after this : and though he now flie, yet may he fight and triumph againe ere he die ; and so mayest thou too, though for the present dejected. That *Peter* that was once afraid of a wenchs face, will not after feare the threats of any aduersarie ; and hee who is sometimes base in a trifle, may after play the man in greatest trials. Say not then, If I cannot beare the losse of a childe, of a friend, of a little wealth, a little ease, of a little sleepe, alas, what shall become of mee, if it should come to fire and faggot ? How shall I part (part I must) with my dearest pledges, and neere friends, and with all my goods ? Yes man, heare me in one thing that I shall say : *Ionah* may with more patience part with his life at one time, than with a roote at another : and that God that can make light crosses heauie, and shadowes of crosses looke like mountaines, can (if hee call thee to them, hee will) make heauie crosses light, and mountaines shadowes. And thus briefly for that point. Beare mee company thorow one point more, and I will trouble you no further, and will be brieft in that. For whom doth *Dauid* thus mourne ? What is he whose death is thus lamented ? Heare him, *O my sonne, my sonne*. Which sonne ? *O Absalom, Absalom*. *Absalom* is then the man. And here a strange matter is offered to those that know not the heart of a father. The sonne practiseth against his fathers house, robs him of his children, abuseth him in his wiues, seeketh to spoile him both of life and liuing : and the father, what doth he ? he weepes for him, he mournes ouer him, hee would die for him : thus doth *Dauid*. In whom, see what a kinde and godly fathers affection is to his childe. No vndutifulnesse, no practice on the childes part, no not death it selfe can diuide betweene him and his

*Doct. 4.*

Cant. 8.

childe. What though *Absalom* can forget *David*? yet *David* cannot forget him; what though he be a very vngacious impe? yet he is my childe: my childe (saith *David*) I cannot but loue him: and indeed he ouer-loues him; which I doe not commend, but only obserue, to note the strength of parents loue if it be naturall, a loue indeed as strong as death, as hot as fire, like that which *Salomon* speakes of in another case, which cannot be put out with water, nor bought out with filuer: and can it be otherwise when parents be religious, sith God and nature both command grace and nature, both inforce loue, though not fondnesse? You that be parents, faue mee the prooffe of this point, and doe but heare why I note it.

Vse 1.

First, doe kinde and godly parents so loue their children, that you may sooner finde too much carnall, than too little naturall affection in them? then shall they neuer make it good to their owne or others soules, that there is any goodnesse in them, who beare no affection to their owne children. Those parents that haue no naturall affection, can they be spirituall affected? Doth that spirit which makes vs louing to all, lodge in the vnnaturall brest? Can they loue Gods children, that beare no loue to their owne bowels? Can they loue their enemies, can they call God Father, that are tyrants to their owne children, their owne flesh? No, no: it argues grosse finnes, and a fierce conscience, when men be so fierce and violent against (mankinde I might say, I must say) themselves. What? Parents not to heare their children when they cry, Father? not to finde their bowels moued when they thinke on a childe? what, not of a religious childe? Why then blush, yee Dragons, and be yee ashamed, O Beares and Tigers, that you, Lords should be (so beastlike say I? nay) so deuillish: for what creatures but Devils hate their feed? Nay, could Devils haue naturall feed, would they hate their owne, throw yee? But why spend wee words on them, who haue the curse vnder feale, as *Paul* shewes? *Rem. 2. 5.*

Secondly, here is somewhat for children also. Is the affection of godly parents such, that they cannot chuse  
but

but loue their children ; and out of their loue, gricue at their vnkindnesse ; weepe for their impietie, mourne for their sorrowes, and take to heart their follie ? why then the children of such parents must take to heart their former stubbornnesse, and for the time to come forbear those practices that might be matter of griefe to their parents. How canst thou refresh thy selfe with that which is a sword in the heart of thy dearest friends ? how canst thou thinke to escape the hand of God, when thou wilt feed vpon the bloud of thine owne parents, and make them as wearie of the light as *Dauid* now is ? Is it not sufficient, that already they haue cared, and sighed, and groaned, and wept for thee ; but still thou wilt kill their soules with griefe ? What if thou canst shake it off ? Can a father shake out his heart ? Doth their loue nothing moue thee ? nor their care, nor their paines, nor their teares nothing ? O that *Absalom* had seene or heard his fathers complaints ; hee thought that now, because hee loued not his father, his father could not loue him : but that is thy error (cursed viper.) The father loues, when the childe hates ; and then can *Dauid* say most feelingly, *Handle the young man Absalom well*, when *Absalom* could say, (if shame did not stop his mouth) *Handle the old Carle Dauid roughly*, at my request : yea, then can *Dauid* die for *Absalom*, when *Absalom* had as leefe die as see *Dauid* liue. Had *Absalom* knowne this, would not he (thinke you) haue relented ? would not his rockie heart haue yeilded ? What could hee haue said, if *Dauid* had said but this vnto him, O *Absalom*, O *Absalom*, did I call thee *Absalom* for this ? Is this to be a childe ? Doeſt thou also thinke my griefes too few ? Was it not enough to be crossed in my familiars, in my father in law, in mine owne brethren, in my wife, but my owne children must adde vnto my griefe ? Must *Absalom*, that I loued so well ? Is it not sufficient that thou hast robbed mee of my children, and brought mee almost to the graue, but now thou wilt haue my crowne and my bloud ? Did I spare thee for this ? Was I a meane of thy life, and wilt thou be of my death ? Would I die to doe thee good, and wilt thou die

Verse 9.

vnlesse thou maist hurt mee ? What, thou my sonne ? Is not *Dauid* thy father ? *Maacah* thy mother ? Dost not know vs, &c. Canst thou forget vs ? Hast thou beene a father thy selfe, and yet risest vp against thy father ? What (I say) could *Abshalom* haue said to such a salutation ? But he is not so happie to heare his father, and therefore he proceeds till vengeance will not suffer him to liue, but hangs him vp against the Sun. And let all disobedient and rebellious children take warning by this one thus hanged vp in gibbets ; and know, that if the kindnesse of their parents cannot breake their hearts, and worke them to remorse, the hand of God will be vpon them and pursue them, till the Rauens of the vallies haue pickt out their eyes, and the flames of hell haue seized vpon their soules.

3

Last of all, here is a word both of instruction and consolation for all sorts, both parents and children, high and low : Is the loue of an earthly father (if godly) so great ? doth he take so much to heart the vnkindnesse of his children ? is he so sensible of their griefes ? so wounded with their sorrowes ? What then is the affection of our heavenly Father towards vs ? how tenderly doth he take disobedience at our hands ? and therefore how great should our mourning before our great and many contempts ? how ought wee to powre forth our selues in teares, and to lament with a great lamentation, like that of the *Egyptians* for *Iacob*, that of the *Israelues* for *Iosiah*, and of a father for his first, his onely sonne ? how deare should the Name of our God be vnto vs ? how tenderly should we take those contempts and indignities that are cast vpon him, who is so feeling of euery sorrow that befalls vs ? O Lord, that wee had an heart to weepe ouer Christ, and that the rebukes of God did fall on vs ! O that our owne sinnes could cause such teares as other mens did wring from *Dauid* ! O that the Word would smite our hearts, and cause water to gush out of these rocks ! O that wee stood affected to God, as *Mephiboseth* to *Dauid* ; hee mourned, hee fasted, hee wept in this distresse of *Dauid* ; wee laugh, wee feast, wee doe not, wee cannot weepe, though wee our selues haue risen against our Soueraigne,  
and

Zach. 12.

Psalme. 119. 136.

and helpen to dethrone him. Ah (brethren) shall *Dauid* mourne for others sinnes in his Psalmes; shall not wee for our owne? Shall *Dauids* good subiects take to heart his afflictions; shall not we, rebellion against our King? Shall *Dauids* seruants be ready to smite him thorow that shall raile vpon him; and shall not our hearts arise when the Name of our God is smitten thorow, when our Father is railed vpon? Nay, shall *Dauid* thus cry out, My sonne, my sonne, for a wretch that would haue killed him; and shall not we mourne euer Gods Sonne, whom we haue slaine? Yes (brethren) we must mourne, if we will be comforted, and make Gods case ours, if he shall make ours his; which if we doe, then behold what comfort is here offered: for, what? is there such affection in an earthly father? what then may we expect at Gods hand, who is an heauenly Father, whose loue as farre exceedeth ours, as the Heauens are aboue the Earth? Can *Dauid* (I leade you no further) loue *Abfalom*? such a childe, because a childe? Can his heart yerne after him? Can he be pacified toward him at *Ioabs* request, when he hath slaine his sonne; and is it not possible that God should be friends with vs at Christs request, though we haue slaine our selues & the Lord of life? Can *Dauid* loue *Abfalom*, when he hath defiled his Concubines, when he seekes his Kingdome, his Life? Can he then die for him, when *Abfalom* would be his death? Can he doe all this, though his sonne doth not submit, doth not repent, doth not craue pardon, but is vp in armes against him; and will not God (whose loue is infinite) for Christs sake forgive his children, when they come vnto him, confesse their fault, be sorry for it, and desire amendment? O my brethren, doe not we wrong God exceedingly, when we will not yeeld him as kinde as *Dauid*? Say, thou hast beene as bad as euer *Abfalom* was; vnholly, vnleane, vnnaturally; would not *Dauid* be friends with *Abfalom*, if hee had confessed his fault; and shall wee doubt of God? O, but *Dauid* was fond, God is iust: yea, but the question is, whether *Dauid* hath more fond loue, than God hath true loue? Say it were his fault; here is the point, Is there so much badnesse in *Dauid*, as there is goodnesse in God? Nay, I put it vpon thy selfe, What can thy

2 Sam. 10.

As Leuit. 24. 11



1 King. 30.

thy childe doe, but thou canst pardon the trespasse against thee, so now he will be honest? Wherefore then (for conclusion) this I say, whatsoever thy sinnes be, neuer sit downe discouraged; despaire in thy selfe, but euer hope the best of God, so long as thou vsest his meanes. Thou hearest that he is a mercifull God: doe now as *Benhadad* did to *Abab*; humble thy selfe before him, confesse thy sinnes, bewaile them, cast of the allowance of them, and endeavour new obedience, and though thou hadst as many sinnes vpon thee as there be sands on the Sea shore, and those as great as *Absaloms*, yet shouldst thou finde mercy, and be pardoned; thy sinnes were finite, God only infinite. Thus in a more generall manner we haue run thorow the chiefe matters of this Text: Now it shall suffice to name only the particulars, or rather some few of them, such as are these following. In that all this stirre is for *Absalom*, *Dauids* delight, we see that the more Gods children set their hearts on any outward thing, the more they shall be crossed in it. Let *Dauid* please himselfe too much in *Absalom*, and *Dauid* shall smart for it; this his greatest ioy shall proue his greatest crosse.

Againe, if Gods people can be content that their children should crosse God, God will be content that their children shall be crosses to them. If *Dauid* will be so tidde, that his childe must not be chid nor shent, God will be so good, as to giue him his payment for it.

Againe, if Rulers will giue life when God calls for death, they shall helpe their friends to sorrow, and their friends (so spared) to shame: If *Dauid* will be so nice; Alas pretty Duck, who can finde in his heart to execute, yea, or to correct such a sweet Baby, and so let him goe; God will finde a time to pay *Dauid*, and to reach *Absalom* for it. Againe, in *Dauid* wee see, that in the best, when crosses come, the flesh will I play its part, and lay about it a while: *Dauid* must run himselfe out of breath, be-

fore hee can stand on any ground, &c.

*F. E. N. I. S.*